WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method for manipulating a broadcast signal, the method

2 comprising:

3   receiving the signal at a headend;

4   establishing a sliding-window time range of the signal that slides at

5 a playback rate as the signal is received; and

6   transmitting at least two streams from the headend, the at least two

7 streams being derived from the signal, and each stream originating from a

8 corresponding different playback point in the sliding-window time range.

1   2.   The method of claim 1 wherein transmitting the at least two

2 streams further comprises:

3   transmitting substantially all of the sliding-window time range of the

4 signal from the headend to form a substantially continuous range of streams.

1   3.   The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have

2 a destination, and wherein the method further comprises:

3   receiving the at least two streams at the destination; and

4   in response to a user at the destination selecting a desired stream of

5 the at least two streams, playing the desired stream at the destination.

1   4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have

2 a destination, and wherein the method further comprises:

3   receiving the at least two streams at an intermediate device;

4   in response to a user at the destination selecting a desired stream of

5 the at least two streams, unicasting the desired stream from the intermediate device

6 to the destination; and

7   playing the desired stream at the destination.

1   5.   The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have

2 a plurality of destinations, and wherein transmitting the at least two streams further

3 ~~comprises:~~

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4   multicasting the at least two streams from the headend, and wherein

5   the method further comprises:

6   receiving the at least two streams at the plurality of destinations; and

7   at each destination, in response to a user at that destination selecting

8   a desired stream of the at least two streams, playing the desired stream at that

9   destination.

1   6.   The method of claim 1 wherein the at least two streams have

2   a plurality of destinations, and wherein transmitting the at least two streams further

3   comprises:

4   multicasting the at least two streams from the headend, and wherein

5   the method further comprises:

6   receiving the multicasted at least two streams at a plurality of

7   intermediate devices;

8   at each destination, in response to a user at that destination selecting

9   a desired stream of the at least two streams, unicasting the desired stream from a

10   corresponding intermediate device to that destination; and

11   playing the desired stream at that destination.

1   7.   The method of claim 1 wherein a current stream originating

2   at a current playback point is being received and played at the destination, the

3   method further comprising:

4   in response to a user at the destination requesting to pause,

5   incrementally switching from the current stream to a different stream of the at least

6   two streams that originates earlier in the sliding-window time range than the current

7   stream, and the incremental switching taking place at such a rate to cause the

8   playback point to remain substantially stationary in time; and

9   in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping

10   the incremental switching.

1   8.   The method of claim 1 wherein a current stream originating

2   at a current playback point is being received and played at the destination, the

3   method further comprising:

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4   in response to a user at the destination requesting to rewind,

5   incrementally switching from the current stream to a different stream of the at least

6   two streams that originates earlier in the sliding-window time range than the current

7   stream, and the incremental switching taking place at such a rate to cause the

8   playback point to move backward in time; and

9   in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping

10   the incremental switching.

1   9.   The method of claim 1 wherein a current stream originating

2   at a current playback point is being received and played at the destination, the

3   method further comprising:

4   in response to a user at the destination requesting to fast-forward,

5   incrementally switching from the current stream to a different stream of the at least

6   two streams that originates later in the sliding-window time range than the current

7   stream, and the incremental switching taking place at such a rate to cause the

8   playback point to move forward in time; and

9   in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping

10   the incremental switching.

1   10.   The method of claim 1 wherein the two streams have a

2   destination, and wherein the method further comprises:

3   in response to user at the destination selecting a desired stream of the

4   at least two streams, receiving the desired stream at the destination;

5   establishing a buffered storage queue at the destination; and

6   in response to a user selecting a desired position in the storage queue,

7   playing the desired stream at the destination from the desired position in the buffered

8   ~~storage queue.~~

1   11.   A method for manipulating a broadcast signal, the method

2   comprising:

3   receiving the signal at a headend;

4   establishing a buffered storage queue at the headend that receives the

5   ~~signal; and~~

6   transmitting a stream from the headend, the stream being derived from

7   the signal, and the stream originating from a user selected playback point in the

8   buffered storage queue.

1   12.   The method of claim 11 wherein transmitting the stream

2   further comprises:

3   unicasting a plurality of streams, each stream being derived from the

4   signal, and each stream originating from a corresponding user selected playback

5   point in the storage queue.

1   13.   The method of claim 11 wherein the stream is being received

2   and played at the destination, the method further comprising:

3   in response to a user at the destination requesting to pause, sliding the

4   user selected playback point within the queue at such a rate to cause the playback

5   point to remain substantially stationary in time; and

6   in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping

7   the sliding.

1   14.   The method of claim 11 wherein the stream is being received

2   and played at the destination, the method further comprising:

3   in response to a user at the destination requesting to rewind, sliding

4   the user selected playback point within the queue at such a rate to cause the playback

5   point to move backward in time; and

6   in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping

7   the sliding.

1   15.   The method of claim 11 wherein the stream is being received

2   and played at the destination, the method further comprising:

3   in response to a user at the destination requesting to fast-forward,

4   sliding the user selected playback point within the queue at such a rate to cause the

5   playback point to move forward in time; and

6   in response to a user at the destination requesting to resume, stopping

7   ~~the sliding.~~

1   16.   The method of claim 11 wherein the stream has a destination,
2 and wherein the method further comprises:
3   receiving the stream at the destination;
4   establishing a buffered storage queue at the destination that receives
5 the signal; and
6   in response to a user selecting a desired position in the destination
7 buffered storage queue, playing the stream at the destination from the desired
8 position in the destination buffered storage queue.

1   17.   A system for manipulating a broadcast signal, the system
2 comprising:
3   a headend for receiving the signal, the headend being operative to
4 establish a sliding-window time range of the signal that slides at a playback rate as
5 the signal is received, and the headend being further operative to transmit at least
6 two streams from the headend, the at least two streams being derived from the
7 signal, and each stream originating from a corresponding different playback point
8 in the sliding-window time range.

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        18.   A system for manipulating a broadcast signal, the system
2 comprising:
3   a headend for receiving the signal, the headend being operative to
4 establish a buffered storage queue at the headend, and the headend being further
5 operative to transmit a stream from the headend, the stream being derived from the
6 signal, and the stream originating from a user selected playback point in the buffered
7 ~~storage queue.~~